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ABSTRACT

Changes in occupational aspirations of South Carolina high school students between 1966-67 and 1972-73 were examined by race and sex. Data were collected as a part of a regional research project involving several Southern States. During 1966-67, all 10th grade students in 42 randomly selected high schools stratified by students' race and size of the 10th grade in 1965-66 were interviewed. Group interviews (either in one group or during English classes) were used, with procedures varying according to physical facilities and school administrators' wishes. During 1972-73, schools were selected from the original sample which would give the best representation of the original. It was found that: (1) aspirations to professional occupations decreased from 43.9 percent in 1967 to 32.2 percent in 1973 among black boys; (2) aspirations to "glamour" occupations increased from 7.9 percent to 18.0 percent among black boys and from 5.9 percent to 18.4 percent among black girls; (3) black and white girls aspiring to high status jobs increased when occupational aspirations were categorized into high (professional and glamour), intermediate (managerial clerical and sales, and skilled), and low (operatives and unskilled); (4) expectation of low status jobs increased among black boys and decreased among white girls; and (5) slight changes were noted in the low level of intensity of job aspirations by all groups, but the number indicating low rankings was very low in all categories. (NQ)

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CHANGES IN OCCUPATIONAL ASPIRATIONS OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS: 1966-67 AND 1972-73*

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Purpose

The purpose of this report is to examine changes in occupational aspirations of South Carolina high school students between 1966-67 and 1972-73 by color and sex.

Data

The data on which this report is based were collected as a part of a regional research project involving researchers in several southern states.[1] The first survey was during the school year 1966-67 and the second was in 1972-73.

Sample

The first group of students constitute a representative sample of all tenth grade high school students in South Carolina during the school year 1966-67. Tenth grade students were interviewed in forty-two randomly selected high schools stratified by color of students and size of the tenth grade in schools.

Seven interviews were used with procedures varying according to physical facilities and the wishes of administrators of the schools involved.

Where possible, all tenth graders were interviewed in one group. The alternative method was to interview all tenth grade English classes during a given day. No attempt was made to get interviews from students who were absent.

A more complete description of the sample and data collection procedures is contained in a previous report.[2]

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* Paper presented as part of a Panel on "Changes in Occupational Aspirations of Southern Youth" to the annual meeting of the Rural Sociological Society, Montreal, Canada, August, 1974.

1/ Southern Regional Research Project S-81, "Development of Human Resource Potentials of Rural Youth in the South and their Patterns of Mobility" and its predecessor project, S-61, "Human Resource Development and Mobility in the Rural South."

2/ Boyd, Virlyn A., "Aspirations, Expectations, and Attitudes of South Carolina High School Students," AE 115, Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology, South Carolina Agricultural Experiment Station, Clemson, S.C., September 1974.

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For the second contact in 1972-73, resources did not permit interviewing in all of the schools included in the first contact. Schools were selected from the original study that, in the opinion of the project leader, could give the best representation of the original sample. For example, in Texas towns, both the Negro and white schools were included in the original sample. Since integration had been effected since the first study, the integrated schools in these towns were included in the 1973 study. It was felt that including these schools in the re-study would give a better representation of changes by color of respondents. In addition, all of these towns had two private academies in 1971 and permission was obtained to interview students in these schools also.

Occupational Aspirations

Occupational aspirations and expectations of the students were obtained by asking the students the following questions:

9. If you were completely free to choose any job, what would you desire most as a lifetime job? (In answering this question give an exact job. For example, do not say "work on the railroad" but tell us what railroad job you would like to have.) Write your answer in the box below.

ANSWER: _____

10. (a) Sometimes we are not always able to do what we want most. What kind of job do you really expect to have most of your life? (Write your answer in the box below. Please give an exact job!)

ANSWER: _____

(b) How certain are you that this is the job you will have most of your life? (Circle one number):

I am:	1	2	3	4	5
	Very Certain	Certain	Not very Certain	Uncertain	Very Uncertain

Occupations

Changes in the occupational aspirations of South Carolina youth by color and sex are shown in Table 1. Only those students who indicated they were white or black are included in the black category.

Among the black boys aspiring to professional occupations there was a notable decrease (up 4.4 percent in 1967 to 12.2 percent in 1972). At the same time, the proportion aspiring to "glamour" occupations increased from 7.3 percent to 11.2 percent. This is due to the increased interest among blacks in professional sports and in the field of professional entertainment. The proportion of black girls aspiring to "glamour" occupations also increased, from 5.9 percent in 1967 to 13.4 percent in 1972. Conversely, there was a decrease from 13.9 percent to 2.0 percent in the proportion black girls who aspired to unskilled jobs.

When the occupational aspirations were collapsed into the three status categories of high (professional and glamour), intermediate (managerial, clerical and sales, and skilled) and low (operatives and unskilled) the differences were less pronounced (Table 2). The major changes were among black and white girls aspiring to high status jobs with an increase from 1967 to 1972.

Changes in occupational expectations of the young people are shown in Tables 3 and 4. The greatest changes here occurred among the black boys expecting low status jobs (+ 6.9 percent) and white girls expecting low status jobs (- 7.5 percent).

The changes in anticipatory deflection from occupational aspiration to occupational expectations are summarized in Table 5.

Intensity of occupational aspirations was determined by analyzing the answers obtained from the following question:

27. Listed below are a number of things that most young people look forward to. Rank them in order of their importance to you. For the one you think is most important put a number 1 in front of it; for the next most important one put in a number 2; and so on until you have a different number (from 1 to 7) for each one. Read over the entire list before answering the question.

_____ To have lots of free time to do what I want.
_____ To get all the education I want.
_____ To earn as much money as I can.
_____ To get the job I want most.
_____ To live in the kind of place I like best.
_____ To have the kind of house, car, furniture, and other things like this I want.
_____ To get married and raise a family.

Check your answers! You should have used each number from 1 to 7 only one time and you should have a number in each blank space.

Table 1. Change In Occupational Aspirations of South Carolina Youth by Race and Sex, 1967-1973

Occupational Aspiration	Boys						Girls					
	Black			White			Black			White		
	1967 %	1973 %	Change	1967 %	1973 %	Change	1967 %	1973 %	Change	1967 %	1973 %	Change
Professional	43.9	32.2	-11.7	53.9	50.8	-3.1	50.2	48.0	-2.2	50.9	57.2	+6.3
Glamour	7.9	18.0	+10.1	9.6	12.7	+3.1	5.9	18.4	+12.5	9.8	11.7	1.9
Managerial	6.2	5.6	- .6	9.4	8.0	-1.4	.7	.6	-.1	1.1	1.8	+ .7
Clerical & Sales	3.9	2.4	-1.5	2.8	2.1	- .7	24.6	22.3	-1.7	23.9	19.1	-4.8
Skilled	21.0	20.7	- .3	14.9	12.9	-2.0	1.0	.6	-.4	.3	.3	.0
Comparatives	5.7	10.0	+4.3	3.5	6.4	2.9	2.4	4.8	+2.4	.6	.9	+ .3
Unskilled	3.6	4.6	-1.0	1.4	2.8	1.4	13.9	2.9	-11.9	9.9	3.8	-6.1
Housewife	--	--	--	--	--	--	.4	.1	+ .5	2.5	3.1	+ .6
No Info	7.8	6.5	-1.3	4.4	4.2	.2	1.3	2.4	+1.1	.8	2.0	+1.2
Total	100.0	100.0		99.9	99.9		99.8	100.8		99.8	99.9	
N =	809	628		1799	897		973	664		1790	891	

Table 2. Change in Occupational Aspiration Levels of South Carolina Youth by Race and Sex, 1967-1973

Occupational Aspiration Level	Boys						Girls					
	Black			White			Black			White		
	1967 %	1973 %	Change	1967 %	1973 %	Change	1967 %	1973 %	Change	1967 %	1973 %	Change
High	51.8	50.2	-1.6	63.5	63.5	0	56.1	66.4	+10.3	60.7	68.9	+ 8.2
Intermediate	31.1	28.7	-2.4	27.1	23.0	-4.1	25.7	23.5	- 2.2	25.3	21.2	- 4.1
Low	9.3	14.6	+5.3	4.9	9.2	+4.3	16.7	7.7	-9.0	13.0	7.8	-5.2
No Info	7.8	6.5	-1.3	4.4	4.2	- .2	1.3	2.4	+1.1	.8	2.9	+1.2
Total	100.0	100.0	--	99.9	99.9	--	99.8	100.0		99.8	99.9	
N =	309	428		1795	897		373	664		1790	891	

Table 3. Change in Occupational Expectations of South Carolina Youth by Race and Sex, 1967-1973

Occupational Expectations	Boys						Girls					
	Black			White			Black			White		
	1967 %	1973 %	Change	1967 %	1973 %	Change	1967 %	1973 %	Change	1967 %	1973 %	Change
Professional	29.2	26.1	- 3.1	39.2	44.6	+ 5.4	36.3	34.5	- 1.8	31.2	33.2	+ .8
Farmer	4.5	7.3	+ 2.8	2.6	2.5	- .1	2.7	5.0	+ 2.3	2.8	2.5	- .3
Managerial	6.9	3.3	- 3.6	9.0	7.7	- 1.3	.4	.6	+ .2	.5	1.2	+ .7
Clerical & Sales	3.3	4.0	+ .7	5.4	4.0	- 1.4	21.9	26.5	+ 4.6	27.6	26.6	-1.0
Skilled	21.8	20.7	- 1.1	18.4	15.2	- 3.2	1.2	.8	- .4	.2	.4	+ .2
Operative	10.9	19.3	+ 8.4	11.7	12.3	+ .6	5.6	11.7	+ 6.1	3.1	4.2	+ 1.1
Unskilled	5.2	3.5	- 1.7	1.4	3.3	+ 1.9	16.7	4.2	-12.5	6.4	4.5	- 1.9
Housewife	--	.2	+ .2	.1	.1	+ .04	8.0	8.5	+ .5	24.3	16.2	- 8.1
No Info	18.3	15.6	- 2.7	12.2	9.4	- 2.8	7.3	7.8	+ .5	3.9	5.3	+ 1.4
Total	100.1	100.0		100.0	100.1		100.1	100.0		100.0	100.1	
N =	809	628		1793	897		973	664		1790	891	

Table 4. Change in Occupational Expectation Level of South Carolina Youth by Race & Sex, 1967-1973

Occupational Expectations Level	Boys						Girls					
	Black			White			Black			White		
	1967 %	1973 %	Change	1967 %	1973 %	Change	1967 %	1973 %	Change	1967 %	1973 %	Change
High	33.7	33.4	- .3	41.8	47.1	+ 5.3	35.0	35.5	+ .5	34.0	41.7	+ 7.7
Intermediate	32.0	28.0	-4.0	32.8	27.9	- 4.9	23.5	27.9	+4.4	28.3	28.2	- .1
Low	16.1	23.0	+6.9	13.2	15.7	+ 2.5	30.3	24.8	-5.5	33.8	24.9	- 8.9
No Info	18.3	15.6	-2.7	12.2	9.4	- 2.8	7.3	7.8	+ .5	3.9	5.3	+ 1.4
Total	100.1	100.0		100.0	100.1		100.1	100.0		100.0	100.1	
N =	859	628		1799	837		973	664		1790	891	

Table 5. Change in Anticipatory Deflection from Occupational Aspirations of South Carolina by Race and Sex, 1967-1973

Anticipatory Deflection	Boys						Girls					
	Black			White			Black			White		
	1967 %	1973 %	Change	1967 %	1973 %	Change	1967 %	1973 %	Change	1967 %	1973 %	Change
None	46.4	43.0	- 3.4	53.8	57.3	+ 3.5	52.4	43.5	- 8.9	50.4	54.1	+ 3.7
Upward (+)	8.7	13.1	+ 4.4	7.4	11.2	+ 3.8	9.7	12.5	+ 2.8	5.4	6.0	+ .6
Downward (-)	24.1	26.9	+ 2.8	25.2	20.8	- 4.4	29.7	36.6	+ 6.9	39.8	33.6	- 6.2
No info	20.4	17.1	- 3.3	13.6	10.5	- 3.1	7.6	8.7	+ 1.1	4.3	5.8	+ 1.5
Total	99.6	100.1		100.0	99.8		99.4	101.3		99.9	99.5	
N =	809	628		1759	857		973	664		1750	891	

Table 6. Change in Intensity of Aspirations of South Carolina Youth by Race & Sex, 1967 - 1973

Intensity of Aspirations	Boys						Girls					
	Black			White			Black			White		
	1967 %	1973 %	Change	1967 %	1973 %	Change	1967 %	1973 %	Change	1967 %	1973 %	Change
1 (high)	7.3	13.2	+ 5.9	16.7	20.4	+ 3.7	4.8	8.6	+ 3.8	6.7	10.1	+ 3.4
2	42.8	40.4	- 2.4	51.6	42.8	- 8.8	54.4	54.5	+ .1	46.0	40.6	- 5.4
3	20.6	18.0	- 2.6	16.0	17.2	+ 1.2	18.3	16.9	- 1.4	23.0	21.9	- 1.1
4	13.6	8.6	- 5.0	7.5	8.8	+ .9	10.9	9.3	- 1.6	10.8	11.7	+ .9
5	5.4	4.9	- .5	3.9	5.0	+ 1.1	4.4	4.4	0	7.5	8.9	+ 1.4
6	2.0	4.1	+ 2.1	2.9	3.9	+ 1.0	1.7	1.7	0	4.1	4.3	+ .2
7 (low)	1.2	1.3	+ .1	.6	.7	+ .1	.7	1.4	+ .7	1.5	1.8	+ .3
No Info.	7.0	9.4	+ 2.4	1.4	2.1	+ .7	4.7	3.3	- 1.4	.4	.8	+ .4
Total	99.9	99.9		100.1	100.0		99.9	100.1		100.0	100.1	
N =	809	628		1739	897		973	664		1739	891	

Table 7. Change in Level of Intensity of Aspirations of South Carolina Youth by Race & Sex, 1967-1973

Level of Intensity	Boys						Girls					
	Black			White			Black			White		
	1967 %	1973 %	Change	1967 %	1973 %	Change	1967 %	1973 %	Change	1967 %	1973 %	Change
High (1,2)	50.1	53.6	+ 3.5	68.3	63.2	- 5.1	53.2	63.1	+ 3.9	52.7	50.7	- 2.0
Intermediate (3,4,5)	39.6	31.5	- 8.1	42.5	31.0	+ 3.2	33.6	30.6	- 3.0	41.3	42.5	+ 1.2
Low (6,7)	3.2	5.4	+ 2.2	2.6	3.7	+ 1.1	2.4	3.1	+ .7	5.6	6.1	+ .5
No Info	7.0	9.4	+ 2.4	1.4	2.1	+ .7	4.7	3.3	- 1.4	.4	.8	+ .4
Total	99.9	99.9		100.1	100.0		99.9	100.1		100.0	100.1	
N =	809	426		1799	897		573	664		1739	891	

Table 8. Change in Certainty of Expectations in South Carolina Youth by Race & Sex, 1967-1973

Certainty of Expectations	Boys						Girls					
	Black			White			Black			White		
	1967 %	1973 %	Change	1967 %	1973 %	Change	1967 %	1973 %	Change	1967 %	1973 %	Change
Very sure	15.2	18.2	+ 3.0	12.3	15.6	+ 3.3	14.8	15.8	+ 1.0	11.5	14.0	+ 2.5
Sure	28.1	25.5	- 2.6	27.0	37.2	+10.2	32.5	26.8	- 5.7	34.6	35.8	+ 1.2
Not very sure	34.7	29.3	- 5.4	35.5	27.0	- 7.5	38.2	37.2	- 1.1	37.0	31.7	- 5.3
Uncertain	6.1	6.2	+ .1	11.6	7.9	- 3.7	6.8	8.0	+ 1.2	10.8	9.2	- 1.6
Very uncertain	1.8	2.4	+ .6	3.3	2.9	- .4	2.9	3.5	+ .6	2.5	3.6	+ 1.1
No info	12.4	18.5	+ 6.1	11.3	9.4	- 1.9	4.7	8.7	+ 4.0	3.5	5.7	+ 2.2
Total												
N =	803	628		1739	891		973	664		1790	891	